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Multiple job-holders methodology

Reference period September 2023

Released 8/12/2023

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Introduction

Multiple job-holders are people who work in more than one job at the same time. This multi-source release includes estimates of the number and prevalence of multiple job-holders, as well as socio-demographic, employment and industry characteristics of multiple job-holders.

Multiple job-holders may have varying reasons for holding more than one job. In most cases, a person's main job has a wages or hours constraint to it, which is why people look to working more jobs.

A 'wages constraint' is where someone has a job that does not pay enough for them during the week. They may then choose to work in a second job to supplement their wages.

An 'hours constraint' is where someone may work during the week, and have a second job on the weekends. This second job may have a higher wage but may not be available on a more frequent basis. An example of this is tutoring, working in elections, or refereeing sports games.

However, it should be noted that in some industries, a second job is used to expand job experience and portfolios. An example is the Health care and social assistance industry.

Health care practitioners could work in their own private practice, as well as being a salaried hospital employee where they can gain experience or gain access to hospital facilities and equipment.

Sources of multiple job-holding data

The ABS has three main sources of data on multiple job-holders. These provide complementary information and insights into the number of multiple job-holders and their characteristics:

- [Labour Account \(/statistics/labour/labour-accounts/labour-account-australia/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/labour-accounts/labour-account-australia/latest-release) – provides headline estimates of the level and rate of multiple job-holding, by industry
- [Labour Force Survey \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release) (LFS) – estimates of the number and socio-demographic, employment characteristics of multiple job-holders
- [Jobs in Australia \(/statistics/labour/jobs/jobs-australia/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/jobs/jobs-australia/latest-release) (JIA) – estimates of the number and selected characteristics of multiple job-holders, based on personal income tax data available from the Linked Employer-Employee Dataset (LEED)

While the Labour Account-based headline estimates are derived from data collected in the LFS, the Labour Account includes adjustments to account for populations which are out of scope for the LFS, namely child workers, employed short-term non-residents and defence force personnel. The difference between the Labour Account and LFS-based estimates of multiple job-holders therefore reflects the (modelled) estimate of the number of multiple job-holders among those people who are out of scope of the LFS.

Some multiple job-holding data is also available from the [Characteristics of Employment Survey \(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/characteristics-employment-australia/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/characteristics-employment-australia/latest-release). This survey is run as a supplementary survey to the Labour Force Survey annually in August.

How multiple job-holding is measured

Multiple job-holders are people who have more than one concurrent job in a specified period.

In the Labour Account, a multiple job-holder is someone who had more than one job at the same time at the end of the reference quarter.

In the LFS (and Characteristics of Employment surveys), a multiple job-holder is someone

who had more than one job at the same time during the LFS reference week.

In Jobs in Australia, a person is a multiple job-holder if they have more than one job concurrently over any 31 day period at any time during the financial year.

See the respective methodology pages for these releases:

- [Labour Account, Australia, Methodology \(/methodologies/labour-account-australia-methodology/sep-2023\)](#)
- [Labour Force, Australia, Methodology \(/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/sep-2023\)](#)
- [Jobs in Australia, Methodology \(/methodologies/jobs-australia-methodology/2015-16-2019-20\)](#)

Time series estimates

As this release is made up of multiple data sources, it contains a mix of both original and seasonally adjusted time series estimates as follows:

- Labour Account – Seasonally adjusted estimates are used to present underlying patterns of change or movement in number and prevalence of multiple job-holders
- Labour Force – Original estimates as Longitudinal Labour Force data is only available in original terms
- Jobs in Australia – Original estimates as Jobs in Australia data is only available in original terms

Original time series estimates are unadjusted data that can include a mix of systematic calendar related events, short-term irregular fluctuations and long-term cyclical behaviour.

Seasonal adjustment is a statistical technique that adjusts the original data to remove the effects of systematic calendar related patterns (i.e. which happen at the same time each year). Seasonal adjustment doesn't aim to remove the short-term or irregular influences which may be present.

Strengths and limitations of each data source

Household surveys such as the LFS and Characteristics of Employment have a range of socio-demographic and employment characteristics such as sex, age, family structure, educational attainment and occupation. Administrative data from Jobs in Australia releases are rich and detailed, but are lagged by approximately 2 years.

The following table shows the strengths and limitations of each data source considered for this release:

Data sources and their strengths and limitations

Data source	Strengths	Limitations
Labour Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available quarterly• Robust industry data• Draws on strength of monthly Labour Force Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No demographic data
Labour Force Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available monthly• Captures seasonality• Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collecting industry and wages data from households
Characteristics of Employment Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some information on second job• Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available annually• Does not capture seasonality• Collecting industry and wages data from households
Jobs in Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed geographical data• Robust industry data• Income data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data lagged by approximately 2 years• Only available for whole financial year